

REVIEW

The impact of ChatGPT on academia: A comprehensive analysis of AI policies across UT system academic institutions

Sanjeev Niraula

Department of Rhetoric and Composition, University of Texas at El Paso, El Paso, Texas, USA



Correspondence to: Sanjeev Niraula, Department of Rhetoric and Composition, University of Texas at El Paso, El Paso, Texas, USA;
Email: sniraula@miners.utep.edu

Received: January 6, 2024;

Accepted: April 10, 2024;

Published: April 15, 2024.

Citation: Niraula, S. (2024). The impact of ChatGPT on academia: A comprehensive analysis of AI policies across UT system academic institutions. *Advances in Mobile Learning Educational Research*, 4(1), 973-982. <https://doi.org/10.25082/AMLER.2024.01.009>

Copyright: © 2024 Sanjeev Niraula. This is an open access article distributed under the terms of the [Creative Commons Attribution-Noncommercial 4.0 International License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/), which permits all noncommercial use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original author and source are credited.



Abstract: Since ChatGPT was released by OpenAI, an American company, in 2022 for the public, ChatGPT has become the talk of every town, as evident by its over 180 million users worldwide. This chatbot's ability to engage in human-like conversations, answer questions, and generate diverse content has sparked widespread debates across various fields, including education. In response to the growing rise and influence of ChatGPT, educators have contrasting opinions; some view ChatGPT as an opportunity, whereas others regard it as a challenge that needs to be addressed on time. In order to deal with the complexities caused by ChatGPT in the field of education, universities have formulated their policies on AI. Guided by the research question, "How does universities' policy on AI reflect academia's view toward ChatGPT?" this study attempts to review the AI policy of the nine academic institutions under the UT system of the United States. The primary goal is to understand the extent to which universities have adapted their policies in response to the challenges and opportunities posed by ChatGPT and how these policies reflect the broader sentiments within academia. To achieve this, this study reviews the universities' policies regarding AI using a qualitative data analysis methodology. The primary data sources include official policies, statements, and guidelines developed by the universities in response to the challenges and opportunities presented by ChatGPT. While reviewing the policies, the study determines whether ChatGPT is banned and why. Or embraced, and if so, in what ways? By examining these policies, the study aims to uncover the various approaches universities have taken to integrate or regulate the use of ChatGPT within academic environments. The thesis of this study is twofold. First, it seeks to provide a comprehensive overview of how US universities have responded to ChatGPT in the educational landscape. This involves identifying common themes, concerns, and strategies institutions employ to deal with the complexities introduced by this generative language model. Second, the study aims to contribute to existing scholarship by offering insights into how academia adapts to the influence of AI technologies like ChatGPT. This study examines the intersection of AI and education and the evolving nature of educational norms in the digital age by uncovering the diverse perspectives and approaches within university policies.

Keywords: AI, ChatGPT, university policy, AI policy, UT system

1 Introduction

Since ChatGPT was released by OpenAI, an American company, in 2022 for the public, ChatGPT has become the talk of every town, as evident by its over 180 million users worldwide. This chatbot's ability to engage in human-like conversations, answer questions, and generate diverse content has sparked widespread debates across various fields, including education. There are two serious concerns regarding using artificial intelligence (AI) in education. Firstly, there is a common fear regarding the misuse of AI by students as they are likely to use AI tools to write their assignments and pass exams. Such acts of presenting the AI-generated writing as their own by the students bring forth the issue of plagiarism. Therefore, AI is accused of promoting plagiarism and academic misconduct. Likewise, another concern is the fear that AI will lead to a decline in the students' writing and creative and critical thinking (Civil, 2023; Warschauer et al., 2023). This fear stems from the belief that students rely entirely on AI tools to complete their work and assignments; they no longer use their creativity and critical thinking to generate ideas (Athanasopoulos et al., 2023). Therefore, some scholars argue that AI might adversely affect the quality of education and ultimately harm the students' learning outcomes and academic achievements (Chan & Lee, 2023; Zhai, 2022). Relevant facts supporting this view can be found in news reports (Korn & Kelly, 2023; Oliver, 2023).

Despite the serious concerns of educators regarding AI tools, especially ChatGPT, as a challenge and threat, some others view ChatGPT as an opportunity (Hakiki et al., 2023). As an example, Deng and Yu (2023) see ChatGPT as an opportunity to enhance student motivation, engagement, and learning results. Likewise, Samala et al. (2024), examining the pros and cons of ChatGPT in teaching and learning, highlight its main advantages, including ChatGPT's ability to provide personalized and adaptive learning experiences, instant feedback, and increased accessibility. Additionally, the writers also consider the potential drawbacks of ChatGPT, such as its lack of emotional intelligence, potential privacy concerns, and overreliance on technology. In response to the growing rise and influence of ChatGPT and the complexities it causes in the field of education, universities have formulated their policies on AI (Papadakis et al., 2023). It became imperative for the universities to develop an AI policy that prepares students to work with and understand this technology. The universities' policy aims to provide clear guidelines to make the students aware of the ethical use of AI and the potential challenge of using AI in academia. Therefore, one of the rationales behind developing AI by universities is to promote academic integrity and discourage plagiarism (Chan, 2023; Cotton et al., 2023).

Guided by the research question, "How does universities' policy on AI reflect academia's view toward ChatGPT?" this study attempts to review the policy of the nine academic institutions under the University of Texas (UT) System. The thesis of this study is twofold. First, it seeks to provide a comprehensive overview of the AI policy of the nine academic institutions under the UT system. This involves identifying common themes, concerns, and strategies institutions employ to deal with the complexities introduced by this generative language model. Second, the study aims to contribute to existing scholarship by offering insights into how academia adapts to the influence of AI technologies like ChatGPT. This study examines the intersection of AI and education and the evolving nature of educational norms in the digital age by uncovering the diverse perspectives and approaches within universities' policies. The paper uses some key terms frequently in the discussion of the argument. One of the frequently used terminologies in the paper is AI, an acronym denoting artificial intelligence. AI simulates human intelligence processes by machines, especially computer systems. The focal point of this paper revolves around ChatGPT (Chat Generative Pre-trained Transformer), an artificial intelligence chatbot developed by OpenAI. In the context of this paper, the term 'universities' refers to the nine academic institutions under the University of Texas (UT) system of the United States, and the term 'policies' encapsulates administrators' policies on AI. The policies include official policies, statements, and guidelines developed by the university administration. The policies discussed, analyzed, and interpreted in this paper are drawn from the universities' websites.

2 Literature review

Since OpenAI launched and released ChatGPT for the public in November 2022, it has stirred debates and excitement in all sectors, including education (Ipek et al., 2023; Karakose et al., 2023). Extensive literature coverage on ChatGPT includes its basic introduction and pressing issues, such as whether it offers opportunities or challenges.

The Quick Start Guide (2023) published by UNESCO provides an overview of how ChatGPT works and explains how it can be used in higher education. One strength of the guide lies in its acknowledgement of the challenges and ethical considerations associated with integrating AI, particularly ChatGPT, into higher education. In addition, it also offers practical steps that higher education institutions can take to deal with the complexities of ChatGPT. In discussing the use of ChatGPT in higher education, the writers are concerned with its use in teaching and learning, research, administration, and community engagement (pp. 7-10). They also touch upon the challenges of ChatGPT, such as academic integrity, lack of regulation, cognitive bias, privacy concerns, and accessibility (pp. 10-11).

Finally, UNESCO's guide concludes by recommending the ethical policy for the use of AI, "used ethically and with due consideration of the need to build individual and institutional capacity, ChatGPT could support HEIs to provide students with a more personalized and relevant learning experience, make administrative processes more efficient, and advance research and community engagement" (p. 13). The guide's concluding recommendation for an ethical policy framework is a commendable call to action. The emphasis on ethical use and individual and institutional capacity-building considerations reflects a proactive stance. However, the guide could provide more concrete examples or guidelines for developing and implementing such ethical policies, ensuring its recommendations are more actionable for institutions.

While UNESCO's guide provides a bright picture of ChatGPT, considering it an opportunity in higher education, many view ChatGPT as a challenge in higher education. Sullivan et al.

(2023) use content analysis to investigate disruption caused by ChatGPT in higher education by analyzing news articles in countries such as Australia, New Zealand, the United States, and the United Kingdom. Their study mainly focuses on academic integrity concerns and opportunities for innovative assessment design, touching upon critical themes such as university responses, limitations and weaknesses of AI tool outputs, and opportunities for student learning. The focus of their research is twofold, “i) exploring key themes in news articles about ChatGPT in a higher education context, and ii) the extent to which these discussions frame ChatGPT as a potential tool for learning and supporting diverse students rather than an academic integrity risk” (p. 2).

However, Sullivan et al.’s findings indicate a noteworthy imbalance in the portrayal of ChatGPT in news articles. Concerns about academic integrity and student discouragement from using ChatGPT suggest a predominant negative narrative. The need for more discussion on productive uses in teaching or explicit institutional policies towards ChatGPT highlights a potential gap in the current discourse. While acknowledging academic integrity concerns is crucial, exploring positive applications and institutional strategies could provide a more holistic understanding of ChatGPT’s role in higher education.

Academic integrity and ethics are the most discussed topics in the published literature. Dwivedi et al. (2023) discuss the opportunities and challenges of ChatGPT for organizations, society and individuals using multidisciplinary insight. The article brings together 43 contributions from experts in different fields. The experts discuss not only the capabilities of ChatGPT but also consider “its limitations, disruptions to practices, threats to privacy and security, and consequences of biases, misuse, and misinformation” (p. 3). The experts also express their opinion on “whether ChatGPT’s use should be restricted or legislated” (p. 3). The references to specific expert discussions, such as Viswakanth’s exploration of ChatGPT’s disruption (p. 4) and Alexander Richter’s focus on collaboration between humans and AI in hybrid teams (p. 7), align with my project’s concerns about how disruption caused by ChatGPT is addressed in policy levels.

Regarding ChatGPT, there is a shared apprehension regarding plagiarism. Eke (2023) examines the ethical issues, particularly academic integrity when students rely on ChatGPT for their writing. Since ChatGPT can produce human-like conversations, students are tempted to use it to complete their assignments and present the ChatGPT-generated writings as their own. As a solution, some scholars have suggested designing assignments so students can rely on their creativity. One such assignment can be multimodal digital compositions. Liang et al. (2022) advocate for a pedagogical framework to teach digital multimodal composing (DMC), like video production, in the classroom. The writers define DMC as “a form of user-generated content, in which students express ideas and construct identities through their artefacts” (p. 307). These products integrate texts, images, sound, movement, video, and/or hypertext. Though the writers focus on DMC to avoid plagiarism, it cannot be the complete solution as ChatGPT is capable of helping the students in DMC projects.

The existing literature on ChatGPT is mainly focused on academic concerns such as academic integrity, creativity, and plagiarism, and more research is needed on the policy level. According to Veletsianos et al. (2023), there needs to be more literature on how universities actively engage with and respond to generative AI tools in the classrooms. Initially, the universities needed to be more knowledgeable about ChatGPT, but very soon, they developed their AI policies to deal with the complexities posed by ChatGPT. Some universities moved quickly to develop policies in response to ChatGPT, whereas many universities followed a wait-and-see strategy that closely examined the responses around ChatGPT. In this evolving scenario, there needs to be more literature about the review of universities’ policies on AI. This research aims to address this gap by analyzing and interpreting AI policies of the academic institutions under the UT System. By doing so, this study aims to uncover the various approaches universities have taken to integrate or regulate the use of ChatGPT within academic environments.

3 Methodology

This research uses a methodology centred around data collection, document analysis, and interpretation to scrutinize the AI policy of the universities under the UT System.

3.1 Data collection

For analysis and interpretation of policy on AI, this study selects nine academic institutions under the UT System. The selection includes The University of Texas at Arlington (UTA), The University of Texas at Austin (UTAU), The University of Texas at Dallas (UTD), The

University of Texas at El Paso (UTEP), The University of Texas Permian Basin (UTPB), The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley (UTRGV), The University of Texas at Saint Antonio (UTSA), Stephen F. Austin State University (FSA), and The University of Texas at Tyler (UTTyler). Their policies on AI, drawn from the websites of these universities, form the foundational dataset for subsequent analysis and interpretation within the study.

3.2 Document analysis and interpretation

The AI policies of the selected nine academic institutions, drawn from their websites, are the documents for analysis and interpretation. This research uses thematic content analysis to analyze the documents. Thematic content analysis is a qualitative research technique that involves evaluating electronic and physical documents to interpret them, understand their meaning, and develop upon the information they provide. Neuendorf (2018) defines thematic content analysis as a qualitative data analysis method that involves identifying, analyzing, and reporting patterns (themes) within the data.

4 Results and discussions

For the review of the policy on AI/ChatGPT, I visited the University of Texas System website (utsystem.edu). Only the academic institutions under the UT system were selected for this research. I visited each institution's website and searched the keywords "Policy on AI/ChatGPT". As a result, only six out of nine institutions have published policy (information) on AI/ChatGPT. The websites of the University of Texas at Dallas (UTD), the University of Texas at San Antonio (UTSA) and the University of Texas Permian Basin (UTPB) do not contain information about their AI policies on their websites.

4.1 Significant themes in AI policy

The thematic content analysis and interpretation of the universities' policy on AI suggest several significant themes. Each central theme has subthemes, too. Table 1 includes the central theme along with the subthemes.

Table 1 Significant themes and sub-themes in AI policies

SN	Main theme	Sub-themes
1.	Definition of AI/ChatGPT	Simulacrum of human intelligence, generative, language model
2.	Instructions for Instructors	Clear and vague guidelines, responsibility and flexibility assigned to the instructors
3.	Instructions for Students	Benefits of AI for students, lack of ethical use and guidelines.
4.	Academic integrity and plagiarism	Strict guidelines, ethical implication, AI citation and referencing and plagiarism detection tools.
5.	AI as an Opportunity	Benefits for both instructors and students
6.	AI as a Challenge	Drawbacks of AI, AI as a tool to promote plagiarism, Use of plagiarism detection software
7.	Neutral Perspective towards AI	Neutral stance, the responsibility of the instructors

Table 2 and Figure 1 have been created to represent the themes' frequency visually. The table shows the number of times that the theme appeared in the AI policies of the academic institutions under the UT system. The pie chart illustrates the number of critical themes in percentage to clarify the themes' dominance in AI policies.

Table 2 Frequency of themes in AI policies

SN	Theme	Frequency
1.	Definition of AI/ChatGPT	3
2.	Instructions for Instructors	6
3.	Instructions for Students	1
4.	Academic Integrity and Plagiarism	4
5.	AI as an Opportunity	1
6.	AI as a Challenge	1
7.	Neutral Perspective towards AI	4

4.1.1 Definition of AI/ChatGPT

Though six universities in the UT system have policies on AI/ChatGPT on their websites, only three universities' policy defines AI/ChatGPT: The University of Texas at Tyler (UTTyler),

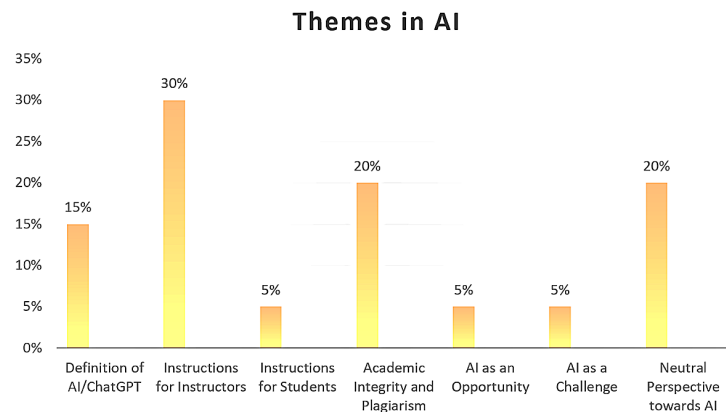


Figure 1 Frequency of themes in percentage

The University of Texas at Arlington (UTA) and The University of Texas at Rio Grande Valley (UTRGV). UTTyler (2023, Artificial intelligence section) defines AI as:

Artificial Intelligence is the simulation of human intelligence in machines programmed to think and learn like humans. AI encompasses various technologies, including machine learning, natural language processing, computer vision, and robotics. These technologies allow machines to analyze data, recognize patterns, make decisions, and even interact with humans in ways that mimic human cognition. (para. 1)

While UTTyler defines AI in general, UTA is more specific in its definition of AI, as its focus is on ChatGPT. UTA (2023, Understanding AI tools and their value in education section) presents the definition of ChatGPT as offered by ChatGPT itself:

ChatGPT is a conversational language model developed by OpenAI. It is based on the GPT (Generative Pre-training Transformer) architecture and is trained on a large dataset of text from the internet. ChatGPT is designed to generate human-like text in response to a given prompt and can be fine-tuned for specific tasks such as question answering, language translation, and text summarization. It can also generate creative writing, such as stories and poetry. ChatGPT is a powerful tool that helps people understand natural language and generate tasks. (para. 1)

Likewise, UTRGV offers a broader view regarding AI. It not only defines what ChatGPT is but also discusses the mechanism of ChatGPT (How it works) and the types of work it can do. UTRGV (2023, ChatGPT – AI technology) defines ChatGPT as:

ChatGPT is a free Artificial Intelligence Chatbot developed by Open AI that can answer complex questions conversationally. It is based on the GPT (Generative Pre-trained Transformer) architecture and is designed to generate human-like text. AI is trained to learn what we mean when we ask questions and can respond very much like humans. (para. 1)

All these definitions have some common keywords, such as “generate human-like text”, “simulacrum of human intelligence”, “generative”, and “language model”, which highlight key attributes and functionalities of AI/ChatGPT. The emphasis on the ability to generate human-like text underscores the technology’s capacity for natural language understanding and generation, a fundamental aspect of AI applications. The term “simulacrum of human intelligence” further highlights the goal of replicating human cognitive processes within these machines. Describing ChatGPT as a “generative” model suggests that it can create content in response to prompts rather than relying solely on pre-programmed responses. Lastly, the characterization as a “language model” emphasizes linguistic abilities, suggesting AI’s proficiency in understanding and generating human language. These shared keywords collectively reinforce the narrative of AI, and specifically ChatGPT, as a sophisticated tool that copies and generates human-like language through advanced generative processes.

4.1.2 Instructions for instructors

Universities’ policies on AI/ChatGPT contain instructions for instructors regarding using AI/ChatGPT. All six universities with AI policies published on their websites contain varying degrees of information for instructors. Some institutions provide detailed instructions, whereas some offer vague instructions. One common subtheme within this theme is the responsibility

of the instructors to use ChatGPT as an opportunity. In addition, the universities have given instructors the flexibility to add their policies while rewriting the policy on AI/ChatGPT.

The University of Texas at Tyler (UTTyler) (2023, Artificial intelligence section) acknowledges AI just as a tool to enhance teaching methods, “AI can enhance your teaching methods and streamline monotonous tasks, but it cannot replicate the human qualities that make you, and your presence in the classroom, unique” (para. 3). The acknowledgement of AI as a tool rather than a replacement highlights a balanced view, recognizing its potential benefits while emphasizing the irreplaceable human qualities that instructors bring to the educational experience. However, the university policy states that instructors can use AI to help themselves with content creation, time management, data-driven insights, innovative teaching tools, automatic transcription and feedback generation.

Likewise, The University of Texas at El Paso (UTEP) (2023, Academic honesty section) offers responsibility to the faculties regarding AI policy, “Faculty should provide clear guidance to students on the acceptable uses of artificial intelligence programs such as ChatGPT” (para. 2). However, the policy does not clarify what is “acceptable use” and what is “unacceptable use” which is likely to cause potential ambiguity and misinterpretation. Establishing explicit criteria for both categories is crucial for guiding the students to become aware of appropriate and inappropriate uses of ChatGPT. Much like UTEP, the University of Texas at Arlington (UTA) policy is also vague in its instructions to the instructors. It (2023, Understanding AI tools and their value in education section) states that it is the responsibility of the instructors “to find value in what these tools have to offer and continue the conversation of how we can best utilize these technological advancements to support our students better” (para. 3). However, UTA does not provide any instructions on utilizing technological advancements for academic support for the students.

Like UTEP, The University of Texas at Austin (UT AUS) and Stephen F. Austin State University (SFA) offer responsibility to the instructors regarding using AI in the classroom. UT AUS (2023, ChatGPT and generative AI tools: Sample syllabus Policy statements section) offers the option to the instructors to explore ChatGPT in the classroom and to “decide whether or not these tools fit within their pedagogical aims and clearly state their course policies in a designated section of their syllabi” (para. 2). Similarly, Stephen F. Austin State University offers guidelines for the instructors to identify AI-generated work to avoid plagiarism. The tips include identifying hallucinations in AI-generated text, false statements, and repetitive, unusual or inconsistent sentence structures. The university assigns instructors the responsibility of promoting the responsible use of ChatGPT among students.

The University of Texas at Rio Grande Valley (UTRG) provides detailed and clear instructions to the instructors regarding the use of AI. To deal with AI in education, UTRG offers instructors strategies such as making themselves familiar with AI, setting clear guidelines and policies for using AI tools in the syllabus and designing assignments. In addition, the university suggests that instructors can use ChatGPT in education in several ways, and some examples include essay scoring, language learning, study material generation, automatic content generation, summarization and tutoring.

4.1.3 Instructions for students

In their policy on AI, all universities instruct the students to follow academic integrity. However, only one university explicitly mentions the instructions for students regarding AI use on the website. University of Texas at Tyler (UTTyler) (2023, Artificial intelligence section) notices the benefits of AI for students as “Students can utilize AI to improve their learning, quickly analyze information, and enhance their understanding of challenging subjects” (para. 4). The policy mentions that students can use AI to help with research assistance, study support, language learning, time management, automated writing assistance and coding and data analysis. However, the policy seems to be absent in the lack of guidelines on how the university ensures ethical use of AI, addresses potential concerns related to biases or creativity, and provides necessary training or support for students and instructors to make the ethical and responsible use of AI.

4.1.4 Academic integrity and plagiarism

Academic integrity and plagiarism are other recurrent themes of universities’ AI policies. To maintain academic integrity and to discourage plagiarism, the universities explicitly mention some strict guidelines to be followed by the students. The University of Texas at Tyler (UTTyler) (2023, Artificial intelligence section) states, “By fostering a culture of academic integrity and responsible AI usage, both educators and students can work together to mitigate the risks

associated with AI plagiarism” (para. 5). To achieve this, this UTTyler encourages to educate students about the ethical implications of plagiarism and the importance of originality in academic work.

Likewise, to foster academic integrity, Stephen F. Austin State University (FSA) (2023, ChatGPT and academic dishonesty section) encourages the instructors to ask students “what they think is or is not considered appropriate use of AI technologies” (para. 10). Other guidelines involve asking the students to produce the draft with instructors’ comment on it and to use the feature ‘Version history’ of Office 365 to see how the students’ writing has changed since it was created.

Similarly, The University of Texas at Rio Grande (UTRG) sets guidelines to encourage students to be transparent about using ChatGPT. To foster academic integrity and avoid plagiarism, UTRG recommends that instructors use quizzes/exams as stake assessments, use detailed rubrics for evaluating assignments (essays, discussions, projects) with specifically defined expectations/requirements, and create assignments that ask students to connect course content with current events and or personal experience.

Likewise, the University of Texas at Austin (UTAUS) suggests that instructors clarify in their syllabus whether ChatGPT is prohibited or permitted in their class. In both cases, specific guidelines should be provided to the students to promote academic integrity.

The subthemes of AI citation and referencing and plagiarism detection tools are related to academic integrity. If students use AI-generated text, they should give due credit to ChatGPT through citation and referencing. UTTyler encourages instructors to teach proper citation methods to ensure students give credit to the original authors of the information they use in their assignments. UTRG recommends encouraging students to use ChatGPT and other AI tools transparently by citing them in their work. However, UTTyler and UTRG need to mention ways to cite AI-generated text in their policies. It is UTAUS that provides guidelines on how AI-generated text can be cited. It links to cite generative AI output in MLA, APA, and Chicago formats.

Likewise, using plagiarism detection tools is another subtheme of academic integrity. Plagiarism Detection Tools: UTTyler encourages the implementation of plagiarism detection software to identify instances of copied content and allow students to correct their work before submission. However, UTTyler does not specify the name of the plagiarism detection software. On the contrary, SFA specifies Copyleaks, Turnitin, and OpenAI, and UTRG recommends AI Detector and GPT Zero to detect plagiarism.

4.1.5 AI as an opportunity

Out of nine, only the University of Texas at Tyler (UTTyler) explicitly states that AI is an opportunity to offer multiple benefits to both instructors and students. UTTyler’s policy outlines AI’s benefits, including content creation, time management, data-driven insights, innovative teaching tools, automatic transcription, and instructor feedback generation. Likewise, the benefits of AI for students include research and study support, language learning, time management, accessibility, automated writing assistance and coding and data analysis.

4.1.6 AI as a challenge

Out of nine universities, only Stephen F. Austin University (SFA) explicitly states AI as a challenge hindering the students’ creativity, originality and academic integrity. Though the policy of SFA acknowledges new and exciting opportunities offered by ChatGPT to expand on teaching and learning, it does not mention what those exciting opportunities are. Instead, the university entirely focuses on the drawbacks of AI in its policy, explaining the hallucinations, false statements and repetitive or unusual patterns of text or inconsistent sentences in AI-generated text. In addition, SFA discourages AI, considering it a potential tool for promoting plagiarism. SFA’s policy states that AI plagiarism can be easily detected using a tool as AI references a wide range of information, phrases and ideas taken directly from other sources. However, SFA must acknowledge that AI is generative and capable of producing the text instead of relying solely on other sources.

4.1.7 Neutral perspective towards AI

Four universities have taken a neutral stance in their policies on AI. They neither categorize AI as solely beneficial nor as a challenge. The University of Texas at El Paso (UTEP) is neutral in its perspective toward AI as it is not concerned with AI benefits nor shows how it badly affects the student’s academic integrity. Instead of discussing the pros and cons of AI, UTEP

delegates the decision to use or prohibit AI in classes to the instructors. If they permit AI use, they are supposed to provide clear guidelines to the students.

Like UTEP, The University of Texas at Arlington (UTA) is neutral towards AI. In its concise policy (information?) on AI, UTA is familiar with the drastic measures some institutions are taking to ban ChatGPT. However, it states that it is the responsibility of educators to recognize the benefits AI brings. Like UTEP and UTA, the University of Texas at Austin (UTAU) needs to state whether ChatGPT is a challenge or an opportunity in its policy. Instead, UTAU also gives its faculty and instructors the responsibility to decide whether to use AI in their classes. It also offers some sample syllabus instructions on 'No use of generative AI tools permitted', 'Generative AI is permitted in specific contexts and with acknowledgement', and 'Students are encouraged to use generative AI tools in coursework'.

Similarly, The University of Texas at Rio Grande Valley (UTRGV) assumes a neutral position, showing both the opportunities and challenges of using AI in education. Its neutral position is evident in the policy statement, "As we all know, technology is not inherently good or evil-it depends on how it is used" (2023, ChatGPT – AI technology section, para. 7). UTRGV also shifts the responsibility to the instructors to decide whether to use ChatGPT or not in their classes.

5 Conclusion and recommendation

The discussion made so far suggests the different approaches and perspectives of the academic institutions of the UT system towards AI in their policies. The findings show that while some universities have a comprehensive AI policy and guidelines, others need more clarity. It is frustrating to notice that even three universities still need to publish their take on AI policy on their websites. While the universities' policy emphasizes the use of AI for the instructors, more students' perspectives on AI should be needed. The policy outlining the advantages of AI for students also lacks explicit guidelines on ensuring the ethical use of ChatGPT. In addition, the research shows that universities have different viewpoints on AI. The different viewpoints on AI as a challenge, opportunity, or neutral tool imply the need for uniformity in the AI policy of the universities of the UT System.

In light of these findings, this research makes some recommendations for improving the AI policy of the universities under the UT system. Firstly, there is a call for a comprehensive policy that provides clear guidelines and ethical considerations for using AI/ChatGPT. Additionally, the AI policy should consider students' perspectives. Likewise, uniformity in AI policy is recommended. Since all the institutions are parts of the UT system, developing a uniform AI policy is likely to avoid ambiguity and bring uniformity regarding AI policy among the institutions. As the information on AI/ChatGPT is scattered under various sections on the websites, all the universities should publish their take on AI/ChatGPT under the 'AI Policy' section for ease of accessibility and clarity.

6 Limitations

This study's review of the universities' policy on AI, especially ChatGPT, has some limitations. The first limitation is the sample size. This research has included nine academic institutions under the UT System. Such a small number may not provide a general picture. Furthermore, the scope of the research may be constrained by its geographical focus on universities under the UT System, limiting the generalizability of the findings to a global context. Likewise, by universities' policy, I mean the policy preferred by the administrators of the universities. Though faculties have the freedom to make some changes, I have yet to include the faculties' policies on AI. The administrators' policy on AI was chosen for this research as the university's policy because of the ease of accessibility. I could easily access the official website and administrators' statements regarding AI, which was not possible in the case of faculties. Therefore, by universities' policy, I exclusively refer to administrators' policy on AI. Lastly, my inherent subjectivity and potential preconceptions about the role and impact of ChatGPT in education may introduce a subjective bias, influencing the analysis and interpretation of the policies under review.

Conflicts of interest

The author declares that there is no conflict of interest.

References

- Athanassopoulos, S., Manoli, P., Gouvi, M., Lavidas, K., & Komis, V. (2023). The use of ChatGPT as a learning tool to improve foreign language writing in a multilingual and multicultural classroom. *Advances in Mobile Learning Educational Research*, 3(2), 818-824.
<https://doi.org/10.25082/amlr.2023.02.009>
- Chan, C. K. Y., & Lee, K. K. W. (2023). The AI generation gap: Are Gen Z students more interested in adopting generative AI such as ChatGPT in teaching and learning than their Gen X and millennial generation teachers? *Smart Learning Environments*, 10(1), 1-23.
<https://doi.org/10.1186/s40561-023-00269-3>
- Chan, C. K. Y. (2023). Is AI changing the rules of academic misconduct? An in-depth look at students' perceptions of 'AI-giarism'. arxiv preprint arxiv:2306.03358.
<https://doi.org/10.48550/arXiv.2306.03358>
- Civil, B. (2023). ChatGPT can hinder students' critical thinking skills: Artificial intelligence is changing how students learn to write. *The Queen's Journal*.
- Cotton, D. R. E., Cotton, P. A., & Shipway, J. R. (2023). Chatting and cheating: Ensuring academic integrity in the era of ChatGPT. *Innovations in Education and Teaching International*, 61(2), 228-239.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/14703297.2023.2190148>
- Deng, X., & Yu, Z. (2023). A Meta-Analysis and Systematic Review of the Effect of Chatbot Technology Use in Sustainable Education. *Sustainability*, 15(4), 2940.
<https://doi.org/10.3390/su15042940>
- Dwivedi, Y. K., Kshetri, N., Hughes, L., Slade, E. L., Jeyaraj, A., Kar, A. K., Baabdullah, A. M., Koohang, A., Raghavan, V., Ahuja, M., Albanna, H., Albashrawi, M. A., Al-Busaidi, A. S., Balakrishnan, J., Barlette, Y., Basu, S., Bose, I., Brooks, L., Buhalis, D., ... Wright, R. (2023). Opinion Paper: "So what if ChatGPT wrote it?" Multidisciplinary perspectives on opportunities, challenges and implications of generative conversational AI for research, practice and policy. *International Journal of Information Management*, 71, 102642.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijinfomgt.2023.102642>
- Eke, D. O. (2023). ChatGPT and the rise of generative AI: Threat to academic integrity? *Journal of Responsible Technology*, 13, 100060.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jrt.2023.100060>
- Hakiki, M., Fadli, R., Samala, A. D., Fricticarani, A., Dayurni, P., Rahmadani, K., & Astiti, A. D. (2023). Exploring the impact of using Chat-GPT on student learning outcomes in technology learning: The comprehensive experiment. *Advances in Mobile Learning Educational Research*, 3(2), 859-872.
<https://doi.org/10.25082/amlr.2023.02.013>
- İpek, Z. H., Gözümlü, A. İ. C., Papadakis, S., & Kallogiannakis, M. (2023). Educational Applications of the ChatGPT AI System: A Systematic Review Research. *Educational Process International Journal*, 12(3).
<https://doi.org/10.22521/edupij.2023.123.2>
- Karakose, T., Demirkol, M., Aslan, N., Köse, H., & Yirci, R. (2023). A Conversation with ChatGPT about the Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Education: Comparative Review Based on Human-AI Collaboration. *Educational Process International Journal*, 12(3).
<https://doi.org/10.22521/edupij.2023.123.1>
- Korn, J., & Kelly, S. (2023). New York City public schools ban access to AI tool that could help students cheat. *CNN Business*.
<https://www.cnn.com/2023/01/05/tech/chatgpt-nyc-school-ban>
- Liang, W. J., & Lim, F. V. (2020). A pedagogical framework for digital multimodal composing in the English Language classroom. *Innovation in Language Learning and Teaching*, 15(4), 306-320.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/17501229.2020.1800709>
- Neuendorf, K. A. (2018). Content analysis and thematic analysis. *Advanced Research Methods for Applied Psychology*, 211-223.
<https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315517971-21>
- Oliver, J. (2023). John Oliver on new AI programs: The potential and the peril here are huge. *The Guardian*.
<https://www.theguardian.com>
- Papadakis, S., Kiv, A. E., Kravtsov, H. M., Osadchyi, V. V., Marienko, M. V., Pinchuk, O. P., Shyshkina, M. P., Sokolyuk, O. M., Mintii, I. S., Vakaliuk, T. A., Azarova, L. E., Kolgatina, L. S., Amelina, S. M., Volkova, N. P., Velychko, V. Ye., Striuk, A. M., & Semerikov, S. O. (2023). ACNS Conference on Cloud and Immersive Technologies in Education: Report. *CTE Workshop Proceedings*, 10, 1-44.
<https://doi.org/10.55056/cte.544>
- Samala, A. D., Zhai, X., Aoki, K., Bojic, L., & Zikic, S. (2024). An In-Depth Review of ChatGPT's Pros and Cons for Learning and Teaching in Education. *International Journal of Interactive Mobile Technologies (IJIM)*, 18(02), 96-117.
<https://doi.org/10.3991/ijim.v18i02.46509>
- Stephen, F. (2023). Austin State University. ChatGPT and academic dishonesty.
<https://www.sfasu.edu>
- Sullivan, M., Kelly, A., & McLaughlan, P. (2023). ChatGPT in higher education: Considerations for academic integrity and student learning. *Journal of Applied Learning & Teaching*, 6(1), 31-40.
<https://doi.org/10.37074/jalt.2023.6.1.17>

- The University of Texas at Arlington. (2023). Understanding AI tools and their value in education.
<https://www.uta.edu>
- The University of Texas at Austin. (2023). ChatGPT and generative AI tools: Sample syllabus policy statements.
<https://ctl.utexas.edu>
- The University of Texas at El Paso. (2023). Academic honesty.
<https://www.utep.edu>
- The University of Texas at Rio Grande Valley. (2023). ChatGPT – AI technology.
<https://www.utrgv.edu>
- The University of Texas at Tyler. (2023). Artificial intelligence.
<https://www.uttyler.edu>
- The University of Texas System. (2023). Institutions.
<https://www.utsystem.edu/institutions>
- Veletsianos, G., Kimmons, R., & Bondah, F. (2023). ChatGPT and higher education: Initial prevalence and areas of interest. *EDUCAUSE Review*.
- Warschauer, M., Tseng, W., Yim, S., Webster, T., Jacob, S., Du, Q., & Tate, T. (2023). The Affordances and Contradictions of AI-Generated Text for Second Language Writers. *SSRN Electronic Journal*.
<https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.4404380>
- Zhai, X. (2022). ChatGPT User Experience: Implications for Education. *SSRN Electronic Journal*.
<https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.4312418>